TEACHING OF ISLAMIC STUDIES IN A MINOR & MAJOR CATHOLIC SEMINARY OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT:

Catholic Christianity has established organised theological institutes both for men and women all over Pakistan. These theological institutions- generally called Formation Houses – can be categorized into three types; Seminaries (Minor and Major), Novitiate Houses (inter-congregational formation houses) and Catechist Training Centers. In this article, we would only be focusing on the Seminaries (minor and major Catholic Seminaries) and its syllabus which is related to 'Islam' whether it is a complete course or part of a course with segments on Islam. It starts by introducing the academic and pedagogical structure of the Minor and Major Seminaries, the historical overview of incorporating Islamic Studies as a major subject, the nature of all Islamic courses, a brief survey of Seminary syllabus through years and the current situation of the academic study of 'Islam'. It also examines the place of Islamic Studies in the broader curriculum of Ecclesiastical Studies and the approaches which have been adopted to teach Islam. For that purpose we have gone through all the scheme of studies in Minor and Major catholic Seminaries of Pakistan.

KEYWORDS: Catholic Seminaries, History, Teaching of Islamic studies, Episcopal Seminary Commission and Ecclesiastical Curriculum

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1.1. Introduction: The context of teaching "Islamic studies" in Seminaries

Contextually we can divide the history of teaching Islam in Seminaries into two phases; the first is between 1947 to 1965 till the Second Vatican Council (a period of 18 years) and the second phase from 1966 to date. The reason for this division is the shift of the Catholic Church's behaviour regarding 'Others' which can be seen explicitly in the Official Church documents. What is shown from the course survey of the first phase is that only the subjects which revolve around the theology of 'Apologetics' were taught. In simple words, the students were educated to defend the Church against other religions. Living in an Islamic environment, the future priests were trained to respond to Muslims in particular. Islam was taught under a general category of 'comparative religion' thus placing Islam on an equal footing as those of other religions of the Subcontinent. However, only one course of 'comparative religion' during the 6 years Bachelors Degree of Ecclesiastical studies was found.[1]

Father Archie de Souza[2], in the Silver Jubilee Report of National Catholic Institute of theology (NCIT), described his personal observations regarding issues like the rapidly changing circumstances of the Seminary, the painful impact of Vatican II's documents and the church's efforts to become compatible to the contemporary situations. He has also described in this report how the *Seminary Commission* has been trying to mold the

[1] Emmanuel Aasi, Ex-rector NCIT Karachi. Lahore, Interview: "Teaching of Islamic Studies in a minor & major Catholic seminary of Pakistan," Personally, November 2014.

[2] Archie de Souza, He was a professor of 'Islam' who has specialized in Islamic studies and also one of the founders of Pakistani Catholic Church, n.d.

curriculum on the lines of Vatican II's Documents and how *Islamic studies* got appropriate place during this molding phase.[3]

A pastoral program was incorporated into the academic curriculum to experience situations in the villages. It also opened its avenues to the world of Islam. Incorporated in the new curriculum of the semester system are courses of Islamic History, Islamic Philosophy and Islamic Theology that are to prepare the students for a wider dimension of his apostolate, namely dialogue with the Muslims and Islam.[4]

Another important figure in bringing about this change was Father Evarist Pinto; an ex-Archbishop of Karachi and professor of Christian Theology. He wrote a brief report on the growth of the seminary and its curriculum in the early years. He also described when and how *Islamic studies* was incorporated into the syllabus.

The study program of Christ the King Seminary has undergone radical changes during the last 25 years. It is possible to see three phases through the years; the early years (roughly between 1957-1962) could be called the "Latin Text Book Phase" when Latin manuals were the basis of instruction. The second phase started with the Vatican II (after 1962), when the seminary studies gradually paid more attention to the life of the ordinary people around (Pastoral orientation) and the values of other religions, particularly Islam (Mission). The old text books obviously proved inadequate. The third phase is the present stage sets when there is a search for a truly incultured program of studies. This means particularly,

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[3] Archie de Souza, *The Growth of the Local Church in Pakistan. in Silver Jubilee Report of Christ, the King Seminary (1957-1982)* (Karachi, Pakistan: Abbasi Art Press, 1983), 15.

[4] de Souza, 16.

the 'culture' of the people plays a key role in the drawing up of the syllabus."[5]

After Vatican II, Islam got special consideration. Internationally the Catholic institutions created new faculty positions to teach 'World Religions' and 'Comparative Theology'. Some hired adjunct teachers, occasionally Muslims but usually Christians with some training in Islam came to fill the educational gap. Islamology, a principle discipline for the higher studies of Islam was introduced.

At the level of Pakistan, the following steps were taken:

- Six new and permanent courses about 'Islam' were introduced to train the future church leaders for the whole seminary education, and for the Bachelor of Theology Degree:
- Segments on Islam were added within many courses.
- Weekly and monthly seminars, conferences, workshops on Islam, Islamic culture and Pakistani environment were held, inside and outside the Seminaries.
- Muslim scholars were warmly welcomed to deliver lectures in pastor centers and seminaries.
- Theological writings left aside the traditional polemical approach and stepped forward to a seemingly more objective mode of studying Islam.
- Dialogue with other faiths was initiated.

1.2. Structural information of seminaries

The higher authorities of Catholic Christians have divided Pakistan into six Dioceses; each of them has a single Minor Seminary while there is a separate Major Seminary for all Pakistani-Christian students, which is also

[5] Evarist Pinto, *Seminary Studies through the Years; in Silver Jubilee Report of Christ the King Seminary (1957-1982)* (Karachi, Pakistan: Abbasi Art Press, 1983), 20.

called the National Seminary. So the Pakistani Catholic community has five Minor seminaries (as Hyderabad diocese merged her seminary with the Karachi seminary in 70s) and one Major Seminary which is further divided into two institutes; *Philosophy Institute* (Lahore) and *Theology Institute* (Karachi). The first Minor Seminary of St. Mary in Lahore was opened in 1950, followed in 1951 by another minor seminary of St. Pius X in Quetta.[6]

1.2.1. Pedagogical information of Minor Seminaries

Seminary education among Pakistani Catholics starts after Matriculation. After passing the Matric exam from the concerned BISE (Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education) of Pakistan, the interested students get enrolled generally in the nearest Minor Seminary established in their own Diocese. It is important to note that all the five Minor seminaries have common syllabus of four years which is approved by CBCP (Catholic Bishops Conference of Pakistan). English is the medium of Instruction. Principally, the first two years cover the courses related to Christian Catholic theology - in which a few lectures on Islam have been added and in the next two years, examination of F.A. (Fellow of Arts or the equivalent to High School in many countries) in Arts/Humanities from the concerned Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) is conducted. The four years' study plan looks like this:

Academic Discipline of all Minor Seminaries approved by the CBCP through Episcopal Seminary Commission	
Year	Courses

[6] "The Catholic Church in Pakistan, Directory 2011" (Lahore, Pakistan: Renewal Centre, 2011), 25.

1st and 2nd year	In the first two years the following ten courses are taught as per ecclesiastical requirement: -Bible Study. Catechism. World history. Church History. Liturgy. Latin (removed now). English Language. Urdu. General Knowledge. Human and Personal Development. Research Methodology
3rd year	F.A., 1st year from BISE
4th year	F.A., 2nd year from BISE

Spending four years here, makes the Seminarians eligible to pursue further study for Christian ministry in the Major Seminary. According to Father Rahat William (Rector, Rawalpindi seminary), minor seminaries are also called preparatory seminaries and considered a 'scrutiny place' where all the students are provided with an excellent educational environment to explore their personality. This exploration process tries to remove their academic, intellectual and spiritual deficiencies. In case of any weaknesses in any of the above aspects of seminary requirements, the major seminary orders to resolve them by repeating one or more subjects. So the courses are subjected to the requirement of Major seminary which runs under the supervision of Catholic Bishops' council of Pakistan (CBCP).

Principally, the Minor seminaries are designed to provide Intermediate level education i.e. F.A. (Arts/Humanities). No science subjects are part of the seminary syllabus because they have to serve only the church ministry and science subjects not considered essential for that in the Pakistani context. Some elective subjects are also taught such as English, Urdu, and Civics…etc. Likewise Islam is not studied separately rather it is included within the detailed outlines of other courses like 'World History' and 'Church History'.

1.3. Islamic Studies: an investigation of the minor Seminary Syllabus

Before proceeding, it needs to be recalled that the Catholic Church has a central directive system. So what we are going to present here about Minor Seminary's syllabus is for all the five Minor Seminaries.

After going through the whole syllabus, I found three small units about Islam. I am presenting here the detail of those three.

1. The course "Church History" gives an overview of the history of the church from the beginning to the present day as well as highlighting the important events of each period and the lives of significant men and women who influenced the history. It covers the period from 33 AD to 700 AD in the first year and from 700 AD to the present in the second year. The second year starts with a small unit on Islam and Christianity 700-1200 AD; it constitutes the following topics: Effort of Islam on the spread of Christianity and on Christian life, St. John of Damascus, The Crusades' duration.
2. The unit on 'Rise of Islam' under the course entitled "World History" hovers around the new religion of Islam with its conquest of the North African coast and Spain leading to the Crusades.
3. In the first year there is a course of "General Knowledge" which includes a small section about world religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Islam.[7]
4. In addition to the above, the students have to study the course 'Islamiat' of BISE (Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education)
5. Both the Minor and Major seminaries also have annual projects about Islam, semester assignments, prescribed Islamic journals, articles, videos on Islam etc.

[7] "Syllabus for the Minor Seminaries" (Lahore, Pakistan: St. Francis Xavier Seminary, 2013), 8–25.

6. Seminaries also subscribe to local and international academic Christian journals like *Focus* (Multan), *al-Mushir* (C.S.C.: Rawalpindi), *Encounter* (Rome), *Pro-Dialogo* (Vatican)…etc. These ecumenical journals assert a variety of Christian-Muslim theological attitudes towards minority rights, women rights, divorce, freedom of speech and social problems…etc.

1.3.1. Saint Mary's Minor Seminary (Lahore Arch Diocese)

The Dean of studies is Father Enayat Bernard.[8]

Objectives

Her objectives are to minimize the distance between Christians and Muslims, to teach seminarians the sacred Islamic creeds and sacred personalities. So they should avoid commenting on any of those issues which can lead to clashes with Muslims. We even advise female Christian workers who work in Muslim houses not to talk other than their job related issues. You should talk about the weather, clothes and education but not the Muslim faith because it is our experience that every Muslim gets motional while talking on Faith, no matter what level and kind of education he or she has."[9]

Approach

"Our approach is inclusive not exclusive. We say what promotes love, humanity and brotherhood."

Tools and methods

Tools to achieve the objectives are same and the methods used to reach the goals are also more or less the same with a minor difference of some new movies like Roman Empire, River Nile, Mughl-e Azam and few extra curriculum activities are observed.

Extra-curricular activities

[8] Enayat Bernard, He is also a graduate of the same seminary, ordained as Priest in 90s and has been Rector of the Major seminary of Karachi, n.d.

[9] Enayat Bernard, April 2015.

"Although Islam is not taught as a compulsory course but there is an exposure to current Islamic situation from the media and newspapers. Furthermore, the seminary is situated inside Lahore so it is directly influenced by any Muslim social or political activity."

Examples of co-existence

The empirical method is applied. All Asian religions are taught especially Islam's sects of Shi'a, Sunni, Deobandi etc.

And the empirical method is like the participation of seminarians in Hamdard Centre for educating themselves on the allegedly controversial Blasphemy Laws of Pakistan. Seminarians visit Shahi Masjid, Shahi Qila (Royal Fort) and tomb of Syed Ali Hajweri. They also visit "Krishna Mandir" (Krishna Temple) situated on Ravi Road Lahore. They participate in conferences held on Christian-Muslim brotherhood organized by Shahi Masjid. They also participate in Muslims' fasting, means they fast as Muslims fast.

Assignment Topics

As far as the students are concerned, they are interested in local and current issues like Taliban, the Modi government, Shab-e-Mi'raj and the things they see in the media. They don't want to write on international issues like Syria or Iraq's situation because they have no vision of it neither do they take historical topics because it requires hard work.

Characteristics of the seminary

1. This seminary has subject specialists so all the teachers teach only the courses in which they specialize.
2. It has more than hundred students.
3. More students mean more educational and social activities.
4. Library is more updated as compared to the Rawalpindi seminary.
5. Study material and other helping data like movies and journals are relatively updated.

6. There is a pronounced focus on social and co-religious activities.

1.4. Pedagogical information of the Major/National Seminary

The Philosophy Institute, St. Francis Xavier Seminary, Youhannabad, Lahore

After completing the studies of Humanities in any Minor Seminary, candidates get enrolled in the Major Seminary for philosophy and theology education whose study duration is six years. These six years are divided into two phases; the first two years are spent in St Francis Xavier Seminary for the study of Philosophy in Lahore and the last four years are spent in NCIT (National Catholic Institute for Theology Karachi).

The Philosophy Seminary, as its name indicates, largely teaches philosophy subjects like Greek, Ancient, Medieval, Modern, Western, Eastern and Islamic Philosophy for two years in four semesters. English is the medium of instruction. Students are required to attend all courses, fundamental and complementary alike, in order to cover 20 hours per week. To be promoted to the second year of the course and even to be promoted to theology studies, a student must successfully pass 85% of the credits allotted during the first year. He/she must also obtain more than 60% overall marks.

Those students who satisfy these criteria are awarded "St. Francis Xavier Philosophy Seminary Diploma in Philosophy".

1.4.1. Islamic Studies: an investigation of the Seminary Syllabus

After I went through the whole syllabus I found that the topics and courses on 'Islamic Philosophy' are scattered both in the Fundamental and Complementary Disciplines. All these come like one complete course and three small units. The course of *Islamic Philosophy* has been put into the category of Complementary Discipline and the three units are part of the Fundamental Disciplines. Their titles, contents and objectives along with other bibliographical details are given below:

1.4.1.1. Segments on Islam

a) Political Philosophy (course no. 8 in the above list):

One unit on *Islamic concept of state* is in Political Philosophy which narrates different political theories like political science, Republic, Ideal State, constitution, the city of God, *Islamic state* as well as renowned political theorists along with their theories such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas and Machiavelli.

b) Philosophy of Religion (course no. 6 in the above list)

After an introduction to the phenomenological spirit and attitude, the students will be led to phenomenological study of the *main religious traditions*, (it is explicit that it includes the study of Islam in the category of main religions).

c) History of Ancient, Medieval, Modern and contemporary Philosophy (course no. 7 in the above list):

The purpose of this course is to give a basic understanding of the main tenets of medieval philosophers with a view to acquire a synthetic view of the period, the formation of Scholasticism – Islamic, Hebrew and Christian scholastics. The rise of Christendom, the rise of Islam and Muslim empire of India under Muslim rule, and the Chinese civilization.

1.4.1.2. Complete course on Islam

Islamic Philosophy

Part I

The nature of Unity or the Whole: Infinity and Zero, the Universe: Life, Man and his Creation. The Idea of God. The Soul: philosophical theories, the nature of the soul, the Qur’anic view of the soul; Consciousness as the essence of the soul.

Pre-Islamic Arabic thought, the Qur'anic concept of Revelation, the Holy Prophet (PBUH), monotheism of the Quran (intrinsic unity), polytheism, man from Qur'anic point of view.

Part II

Muslim Philosophers: Ibn-e-Sīnā (980-1037), Ibn-e-Rushd (1126-1198), al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī, popular Islam, mystical Islam, Sultān Bāhu, Bulleh Shāh, Wāris Shāh and Muḥammad Iqbāl.

1.5. Pedagogical information of the Major Seminary

Christ the King Seminary (CKS) and National Catholic institute of Theology (NCIT)

After getting two years Diploma in philosophy studies in Lahore, the seminarians get enrolled in *Christ the King Seminary, Karachi*. Christ the King Seminary is a Formation House for theologians preparing for Diocese Priesthood. It is the National Institution, established by the Episcopal Conference. On the right side of the main gate is the NCIT building (National Catholic Institute of Theology). It takes care of the academic aspects of students, while Christ the King Seminary looks after the overall formation of the students. The seminary is a house and school of formation where the students live in small communities, called Houses, to have an experience of life in a larger community. The whole Seminary is divided into four Houses; St. Thomas, St. Jean-Marie Vianney, St. Charles Borromeo and Pope John Paul II. Each house has ten students with a coordinator. Students live like a family, sharing common goals, pastoral experiences, intellectual and spiritual insights, Bible sharing, group study, games and manual work.[10]

[10] "Compendium of Christ the King Seminary 2013-2014" (Karachi, Pakistan: Rotti Press, 2013), 1–3.

NCIT offers three kinds of courses:

1. Bachelor of Theology (four years)
2. Diploma in Theological Studies (two years)
3. Certificate in Theological Studies (one year)

The students are admitted in Bachelor of Theology for four years plus two years Pastoral work. Pastoral work refers to the actual work or assignment chosen by the student himself or given to them by the pastoral coordinator. Seminarians undertake activities according to their year in the seminary. They are invited into this educational process gradually.[11]

1.5.1. Number of Students

As far as the Christian community is concerned, its population is 1.6 percent in Pakistan. With this population ratio, very few graduates are expected. I was informed by a philosophy teacher of the Major Seminary of Lahore (Fr. Rafael Mehnga) that around 40 to 45 students are enrolled in the Philosophy Institute at Lahore. After three to four years when they reach the Theology Institute at Karachi their numbers are further reduced to 20 to 25.

This is also the average student ratio of the Major seminary. It started with four students on its foundation which now has reached to 20 to 25. An annual report of NCIT's academic year 2008-2009, describes "NCIT was blessed this academic year with the largest theology class in its history, i.e. 32. The academic staff in their assessment meeting was of the opinion that "this is a very promising class." This is the story of enrollment in the first year; what about the number when they pass out after completion. A

[11] Rahmat Hakim, *Pastoral Field Education Program; in Silver Jubilee Report of Christ the King Seminary Karachi (1957-1982)* (Karachi, Pakistan: Abbasi Art Press, 1983), 50.

Minor Seminary's rector informed me that the number of students was 23 when he was enrolled but only 3 passed out after completing the whole seminary duration from Karachi. This was the situation of ten years ago. How about now? The same annual report of NCIT continues, "We wish to congratulate our 6 graduates who have completed all the requirements of NCIT for their Theological Formation and would be leaving us to actively serve the people of God in various dioceses of Pakistan."[12]

1.5.2. Islamic Studies: An investigation of the Syllabus

A careful examination of the courses offered to NCIT students, leads us to the fact that five complete courses discuss Islam directly whose detail is as under. The courses can be categorized as under;

1. Category one: Compulsory courses on Islam dealing with the basics of faith and the relationship of Islam and Christianity (historically, doctrinally).
2. Category two: Segments on Islam as part of general (usually introductory) courses on comparative ethics and interfaith studies.

In the lines to follow, we are going to take stock of the courses that are taught at the Major Seminary in all its detail.

1.5.2.1. Category one: Compulsory courses on Islam

DIS 101: Islam: Introduction

Aim and Contents

The aim of this course is to familiarize the students with the basic beliefs and practices of Islam and to examine the role of Islam in today's world. A systematic and objective study of Islam is offered. The reasons for studying Islam are explored. Emphasis is placed on the need to understand

[12] "Annual Report of NCIT, Academic Year 2008-2009" (Karachi, Pakistan: NCIT, 2009), 8.

and respect the religious mentality of Muslims, with a view to bring about inter-faith dialogue. This course will examine the socio-religious history of pre-Islamic Arabia, the dawn of Islam and the life of Prophet Muhammad. The pivotal place of the Holy Qur’an is stressed and focus is given to reading from it. The importance of Hadith in the everyday life of a Muslim is also examined. The course includes a study of the Muslim’s article of faith together with the five pillars of Islam. The role of Islam in the modern world is also scrutinised. The course has no prerequisites.

DIS202 Shar’ia & Islamic Jurisprudence

Aim and Contents

To present the legal system and laws of pre-Islamic Arabia, and to show how these influenced the formation of Shar’ia law, and to examine the impact of these laws in the modern world, especially in Pakistan. The course offers a scientific study and interpretation of law within the different Sunni and Shi’a schools. The sources of these laws will be examined. Civil laws including marriage, divorce, dowry, guardianship, laws on trust and gifts, and rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic state will be studied in detail, especially with reference to Pakistan. Shar'a criminal law (al-‘Uqūbāt) and punishment (al-Ḥudūd) in force in Pakistan will be examined, and their effect on the non-Muslims will be discussed.

DIS2/303 Christian & Muslim Spiritual Traditions

Aim and Contents

To consider the theory, practice and influence of Christian spirituality lived in the context of and side by side with Islam.The course deals with Sufism and makes a comparison between selected sufis of Pakistan [Bulleh Shāh, Shāh Abdul Latīf Bhittāi, Wāris Shāh] and Christian mystics, in particular St. Francis of Assisi. Christian and Muslim spiritual

practices and devotions are compared and contrasted. Special attention is given to Shia devotional practices during Moharram in the context of Pakistani Catholic devotion to the suffering Christ.

DIS2/304 Kalam: Themes in Islamic Theology

Aim and Contents

The course offers a comparative study between Christian and Muslim theology by exploring the meaning and development of Islamic theology, the emergence of its different schools and their approach and interpretations.Major themes such as good works, free will, predestination, faith and reason will be studied in detail with a view to an enriched understanding of Islamic and Christian theology.

CCH2 307 The Church's Encounter with Islam (7^{th} Century to the Present)

To throw light on present Christian-Muslim relations through a historical study of the inter-relation between the two religions. The course begins with a presentation of the situation of Christianity in pre-Islamic Arabia. It then deals with the reaction of the Church to the expansion of Islam through Syria, the Persian Empire, Egypt, North Africa and Spain. The Crusades are studied. The situation of Christians in the Ottoman Empire is investigated. The reaction of Muslims to European colonial expansion will be examined. The present situation of Christians and the church in various Muslim countries will be examined.

DCC205 Current Issues in Church and Pakistani Society

To assist students to recognize and respond to challenges to the church and Christians in Pakistani society. The course deals with the issues of minority/Majority in Pakistan, *The blasphemy Laws, Hudood laws and the Laws of Evidence, Religious Freedom*, the church's stand for the poor and oppressed in Pakistan, the contribution of the church in Pakistan to health

and education, the challenge of multi-culturalism and the issues of racism within the church in Pakistan.

1.5.2.2. Category Two: Islam as part of other courses
CCH 203 History of the Church in Asia and the Sub-Continent

Contents

The course begins with an investigation of the missionary work related to St. Thomas. It presents the missionary activity of the Church of the East in present day Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, India and China. It examines the influence of Christianity on the Mongols in the 11^{th} and 12^{th} centuries. It deals with the arrival and growth of Christianity in China, Japan, the Philippines and Korea with special attention given to St. Francis Xavier and Matteo Ricci. A particular focus is the history of the church in India and Pakistan.

BS101 Introduction to Sacred Scripture

Contents: The unit initiates a scientific study of the Holy Bible in the areas of Inspiration, truth, canonicity, text and version, hermeneutic, and interpretation. A comparative study will be made of the understanding of inspiration in selected Asian religions, especially Islam. The historical and geographical context of the Bible and its writers will be presented. The methodology of the Biblical exegesis will be explained and illustrated through examples of selective OT and NT texts.

CDT206 Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation & Eucharist

Content: The course highlights the important shifts in the understanding of sacraments and their importance in Christian community. In this course the Christian rites of Initiation are presented as part of a comparative study

with the rites of Islam and Hinduism, and within the perspective of Pakistani Culture.

CDT210 Theology of Eschatology

Contents: An introduction is first given about the place of eschatology in the study of theology and eschatological thought expressed in contemporary theologies of hope. The Biblical, historical and doctrinal approaches will be treated. Major themes such as Christian Hope, theology of death, life after life, Parousia, last judgment, purgatory, hell and heaven will be studied. An overview of eschatological thought in other religions will be presented.

DMM2/303 Missiology: The Church and Other World Religions

Contents: The course complements DIS101 on Islam by studying the tenets and practices of Hinduism and Buddhism. A theological understanding of dialogue based on the documents of Vatican II and Federation of Asian Bishops (FABC) will then be offered with a consideration of the practical implications of this within Pakistan.

As the last and compulsory requirement for Bachelor of Theology, the students are required to write a research project.[13]

1.6. Objectives & Mission statement of teaching Islam

1.6.1. The minor seminary

According to the minor seminary's official documents, it is to equip and mould our students who are called to serve, to provide the dynamic leaders and priests to serve the people of god, to witness the salvation of God, to

[13] "Annual Report of NCIT, Academic Year 2008-2009," 9.

be future religious missionaries and priests to understand and live faithfully in today's multi-faith and pluralistic world, to share and cultivate the consciousness of God, to communicate and exegete the word of God, to lead/ contribute to the development of Catholic Faith[14]

1.6.1.2. The Major Seminary

The Philosophy Institute (St. Xavier Major Seminary, Lahore) narrates its objectives as, "the faculty of philosophy aims at promoting philosophical studies and encouraging an in-depth knowledge of the values offered by the different cultures, paying special attention to the Islamic culture and tradition of our country to serve as a basis for their future theological studies and ministry."[15] According to the annual report of the Theology Institute (NCIT), in 1997 the mission statement of NCIT was formulated which is a general statement of the Major seminary with reference to all the priestly activities. It said that "its mission is to provide for the theological education of men and women - clergy, religious and laity and is therefore directed towards the goals of personal faith development, evangelisation and service in the church and wider community"[16]

As for as the objectives of teaching Islam are concerned, it narrates as under: it looks for an active and fruitful co-operation with other christian churches, it strives to work with other religious traditions for the betterment of whole human family.[17]

1.7. Conclusion

After knowing the nature of course outlines, the adopted methodologies

[14] "Seminary's Introduction" (Faisalabad, Pakistan: Faisalabad Diocese, 2015), 1–3.
[15] "A Hand Book of St. Francis Xavier Seminary" (Lahore, Pakistan: Philosophy Institute, 2005), 5.
[16] "Annual Report of NCIT, Academic Year 2008-2009," 9.
[17] "A Hand Book of Christ the King Seminary" (Karachi, Pakistan: NCIT, 2014), 15.

and bibliographical literature of seminaries syllabi as well as the extra-curricular activities, it is explicit that Vatican's ecclesiastical authorities (Roman Curia) are well aware of the international regional needs, challenges and their proposed solutions. Owing to that they put it on local bodies of Catholic Church like *Catholic Bishops' Conference* and *Episcopal Seminary Commission* to design such a comprehensive syllabus which include not only the compulsory ecclesiastical Courses (like Canon Law, Catechism, Church History, Liturgy) but also the regional flourishing disciplines. Consequently, the local bodies incorporated English, Urdu Languages, Ghalib, Iqbal, six complete courses on Islam and few segments. On one hand, it looks very impressive that ilm al-kalam, Tasawwuf, Usul e Fiqh is taught in missionary institutes and the methodologies are not polemic but positive, inclusive and interfaith harmony centered. On the other hand, practically they are polemic as I interviewed a major seminary's rector, fearing Islamic cultural hegemony, always blaming Islamisation of the Constitution and the last important thing is that maximum bibliographical books are written by foreign authors, orientalists who always have reservations about Islam. So the dream of promoting local theology and interfaith harmony by foreign books looks very strange, implausible, incompatible and far-fetched. It can only come into being when the bibliography is replaced by Muslim authors' books and Muslim teachers are appointed to teach *Islamic studies* not the Christians.